Higher Education Committee Meeting

Tuesday, February 1, 2011

Bobby Cagle, MSW
Commissioner

Presentation Organization

- Importance of High Quality Pre-K
- Characteristics of Georgia's Pre-K
- Georgia's Pre-K Results
- Program Challenges
- Next Steps

Importance of High Quality Pre-K: Brain Development

- Understanding of brain development has greatly increased over the last two decades.
- Brain development in the early years is exponential. The first years of a child's life serve as a foundation for later development.

Shonkoff, J.P. (2007, August 7). *A Science-Based Framework for Early Childhood Policy*. Presentation at the Annual Meeting of the National Conference of State Legislatures, Boston, MA. Retrieved July 26, 2010, from http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu/content/downloads/8-7-07_NCSL_Shonkoff_Presentation.pdf

Importance of High Quality Pre-K: Brain Development

- A strong foundation increases the probability of positive outcomes. A weak foundation increases the odds of later difficulties.
- Toxic stress, the most severe form of stress, can damage brain architecture and lead to lifelong problems in learning, behavior, and physical and mental health.

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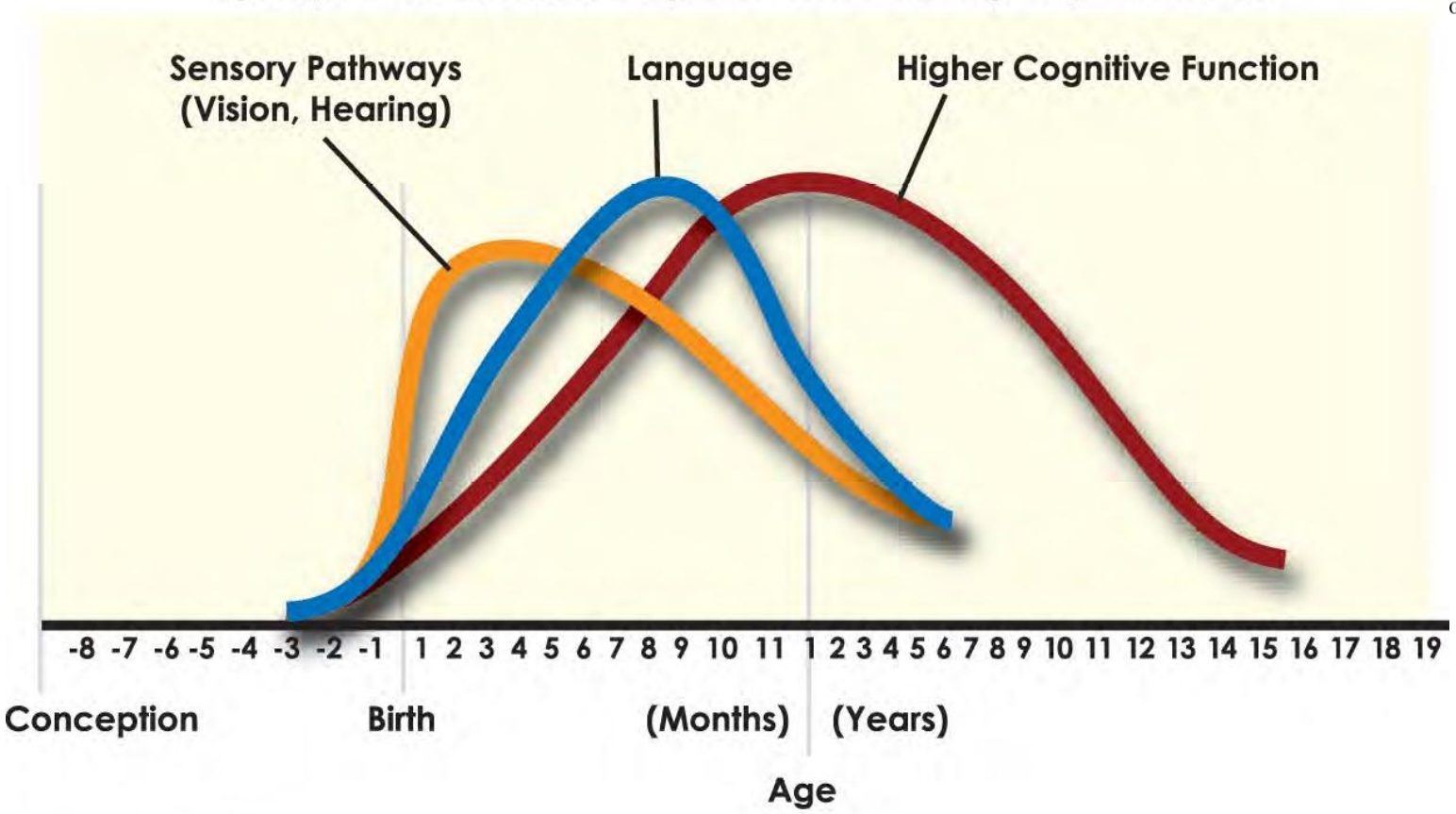
Human Brain Development

Synapse Formation Dependent on Early Experiences



Source: Nelson (2000)

Shonkoff, J.P. (2007, August 7). *A Science-Based Framework for Early Childhood Policy*. Presentation at the Annual Meeting of the National Conference of State Legislatures, Boston, MA. Retrieved Jan. 26, 2010, from http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu/content/downloads/8-7-07_NCSL_Shonkoff_Presentation.pdf

Importance of High Quality Pre-K: Quality

- Research underscores the importance of high quality early education in brain development.
- High quality early learning experiences provide a strong foundation for children's later academic experiences.
- High quality includes skilled and educated teachers, small class sizes, age appropriate curricula, language rich environment, and warm and responsive interactions.

Shonkoff, J.P. (2007, August 7). *A Science-Based Framework for Early Childhood Policy.* Presentation at the Annual Meeting of the National Conference of State Legislatures, Boston, MA. Retrieved July 26, 2010, from http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu/content/downloads/8-7-07_NCSL_Shonkoff_Presentation.pdf

Gormley, W. T., Phillips, D., & Gayer, T. (2008, June 27). Preschool programs can boost school readiness. *Science*, *320*, 1723-24.

Importance of High Quality Pre-K: Pertinent Research Study

- 2008 Tulsa (OK) Study
  - Powerful research design.
  - Participation in the Pre-K program was a more powerful predictor of pre-reading and pre-writing test outcomes than key socio-economic indicators.
  - State program yielded more benefits than traditional child care.

Reynolds, A.J., et al. (2007, August). Effects of a school-based, early childhood intervention on adult health and well-being. *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, 161*(8), 730-739.
Gormley, W. T., Phillips, D., & Gayer, T. (2008, June 27). Preschool programs can boost school readiness. *Science, 320*, 1723-24.

Importance of High Quality Pre-K: Return on Investment

- Classic early education studies attributed economic benefits of quality early education to:
  - Increased earnings of the participants.
  - Public savings due the reduced crime.
  - Reduced need for remedial education, rehabilitation, and treatment.

Heckman, J., Grunewald, R., & Reynolds, A. (2006). "The Dollars and Cents of Investing Early: Cost-Benefit Analysis in Early Care and Education." Washington, DC: Zero to Three.
Wat, A. (2007). "Dollars and Sense: A Review of Economic Analyses of Pre-K." Washington, DC: Pre-K Now.

Importance of High Quality Pre-K: Return on Investment

- Return on Investment Findings:
  - Perry Preschool Project: $17.07 for every $1 invested.
  - Chicago Child Parent Centers: $10.15 for every $1 invested.
- For each additional child served in a Pre-K program, school districts can save between $2,600 and $4,400 over the child's K-12 experience.

Heckman, J., Grunewald, R., & Reynolds, A. (2006). "The Dollars and Cents of Investing Early: Cost-Benefit Analysis in Early Care and Education." Washington, DC: Zero to Three.
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Importance of High Quality Pre-K: Return on Investment

- Adverse early environments are powerful predictors of failure in school.
- Remediation efforts become more costly the later they are attempted.
- Return on investment for quality early childhood programs yields higher returns than other remedial initiatives.

Heckman, J., Grunewald, R., & Reynolds, A. (2006). "The Dollars and Cents of Investing Early: Cost-Benefit Analysis in Early Care and Education." Washington, DC: Zero to Three.
Wat, A. (2007). "Dollars and Sense: A Review of Economic Analyses of Pre-K." Washington, DC: Pre-K Now.

Characteristics of Georgia's Pre-K: History

- Began in 1992 as a pilot program serving 750 at-risk children.
- Program became universal (open to all children regardless of family income) in 1995.
- Programs receive regular on-site monitoring by a trained educational consultant.
- Program is based on four key foundations:

Characteristics of Georgia's Pre-K: Access and Quality

- FY 2011 = 84,000 funded slots
- December 2010 = 82,845 children enrolled (98.6%).
- 4,219 classes in 1,949 sites across the state.
- 1,127 private child care centers and 797 local schools participated in the program.
- 90% of lead teachers hold a 4-year degree or above.

Characteristics of Georgia's Pre-K

- Available in all 159 counties under a variety of settings.
- Parents are able to choose a program that best meets their child's and family's needs.
- Unlike other states that fund all programs through local school systems, Georgia utilizes a competitive grant process that funds directly to awarded programs, both public and private.

Characteristics of Georgia's Pre-K

- Approximately 58% of eligible four year olds statewide are served in the program. In 68 counties, 70% or more of the estimated four year olds are served in Georgia's Pre-K.
- Georgia ranks **3rd** in the country on the percentage of four year olds served and in the **top 10** for high quality standards.

Characteristics of Georgia's Pre-K: Benefits of a Universal Program

- Program effects on disadvantaged children appear to be larger when programs serve children from diverse backgrounds.
- Although children below the poverty line may be at greater risk of school failure, most school failure occurs in children above the poverty line.
- Children from middle-income families may have the least access to quality preschool experiences.

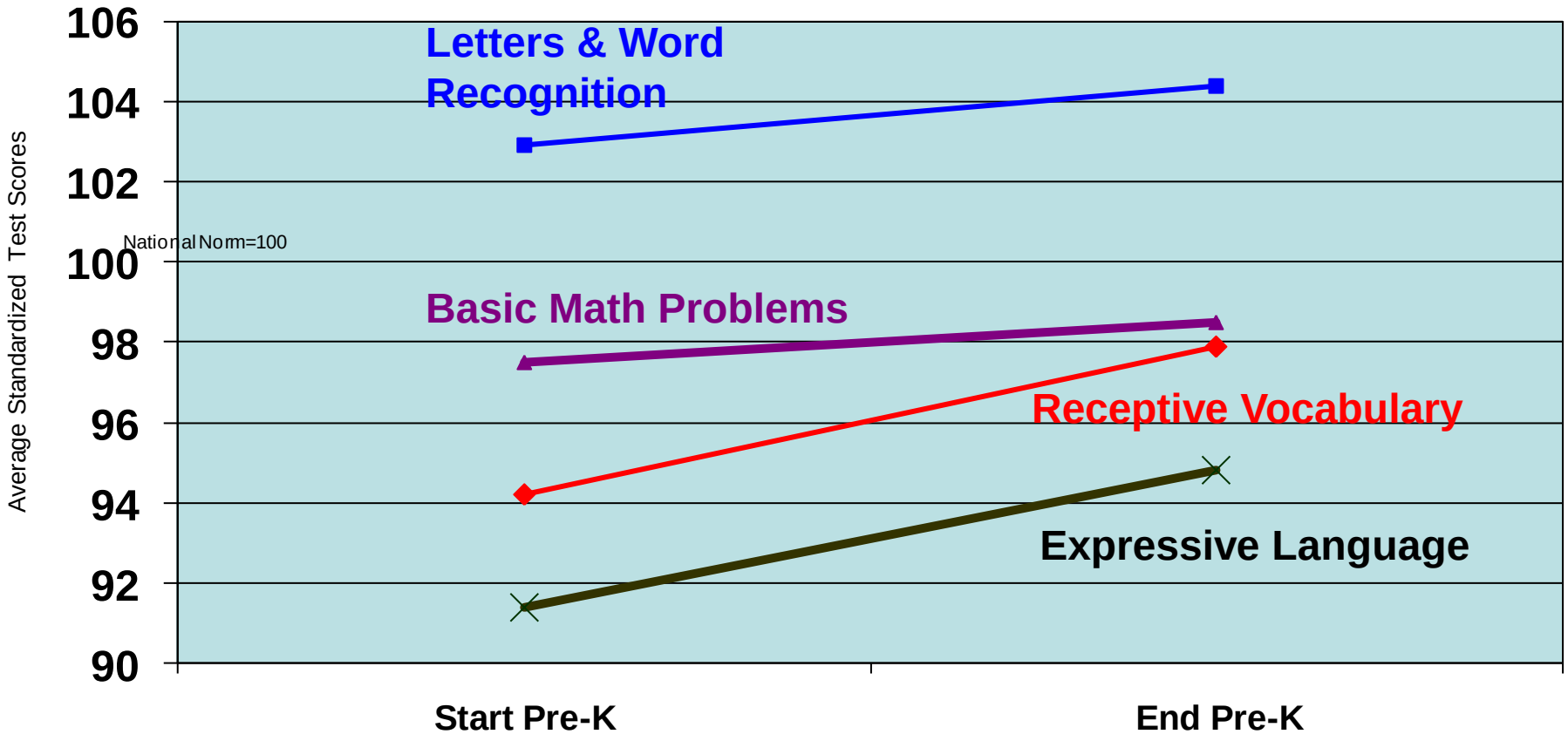
Barnett, W. S. (2008). *Preschool Education and Its Lasting Effects: Research and Policy Implications.* Boulder and Tempe: Education and the Public Interest Center & Education Policy Research Unit.

Ackerman, D.J, Barnett, W.S., Hawkinson, L.E., Brown, K. and McGonigle, E.A. (2009). *Providing Preschool Education for All 4-Year Olds: Lessons from Six State Journeys.* New Jersey: National Institute for Early Education Research.

Characteristics of Georgia's Pre-K: Services to Targeted Populations

- Fifty-five percent Category One
- Increased number of inclusion classrooms.
- Increased number of blended Pre-K / Head Start classrooms.
- Conducted Summer Transition Program based in 2010. Evaluation demonstrated strong impacts.
- Transition Coach program helps children and families transition to Kindergarten.

Pre-K Results: Improved Child Outcomes (2001-2004)



Pre-K Results: Economic Impact (2007)

- The child care industry in Georgia (including GA Pre-K):
  - Generates over $4.1 billion in the state each year.
  - Provides 61,203 jobs in the industry itself.
  - Generates an additional 12,900 jobs in other industries.
- Level of parent annual earnings supported by child care is at least $13.6 billion and may be as high as $32.7 billion.
- Approximately 35% of child care centers receive Georgia's Pre-K program funds.
- Centers who participate in Georgia's Pre-K receive, on average, approximately 50% of their revenues from the program.

Child Policy Partnership. (2008). *Economic Impact of the Early Care and Education Industry in Georgia.* http://www.cviog.uga.edu/services/research/childcare/

Pre-K Results: Quality (2010)

- Quality results for Georgia's Pre-K were higher than those for non Georgia's Pre-K preschool classrooms and infant/toddler care.
- Georgia's Pre-K Program has many strengths that form a strong foundation on which to improve.
- Results indicate that, on average, Georgia's Pre-K classrooms are warm, exciting places for four year olds, but opportunities for higher levels of learning are not maximized.
- These results trend similarly to national studies of other Pre-K programs.

Maxwell, K. L., Early, D. M., Bryant, D., Kraus, S., Hume, K., & Crawford, G. (2009). *Georgia Study of Early Care and Education: Findings from Georgia's Pre-K Program*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, FPG Child Development Institute. http://decal.ga.gov/BftS/ResearchStudyOfQuality.aspx

Current Challenges

- Meeting Wait List Demand
  - December 2010: 9,742
- Meeting Capacity
- Funding Challenges

Increase of $226 dollars per child over an 18-year period

FY 1993	750 slots	$ 4,000
FY 1994	8,700 slots	$ 4,253
FY 1995	15,500 slots	$ 5,032
FY 1996	44,000 slots	$ 4,136
FY 1997	57,000 slots	$ 3,596
FY 1998	60,000 slots	$ 3,500
FY 1999	61,000 slots	$ 3,541
FY 2000	62,000 slots	$ 3,629
FY 2001	62,500 slots	$ 3,664
FY 2002	63,500 slots	$ 3,732
FY 2003	65,900 slots	$ 3,839
FY 2004	68,200 slots	$ 3,812
FY 2005	72,000 slots	$ 3,833
FY 2006	74,000 slots	$ 3,919
FY 2007	76,600 slots	$ 4,034
FY 2008	78,000 slots	$ 4,167
FY 2009	79,000 slots	$ 4,266
FY 2010	82,000 slots	$ 4,171
FY 2011	84,000 slots	$ 4,226

Where Georgia's Pre-K Is Going

- Improving Quality: Focus on improving instructional support
- Continued alignment to K-3 education system
  - Georgia Testing Identification Number (GTID) to link each child to DOE Longitudinal Data System
  - Increase in online Pre-K assessment to link to DOE database
  - Current Standards Project
- Participation in Race to the Top